

Message Text

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53

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 ADP-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 PM-09 H-02

INR-09 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14

T-03 IO-13 DPW-01 AID-20 NSCE-00 CCO-00 RSR-01 /140 W

----- 009543

O R 091205 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2946

DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMCONSUL UDORN

USDEL FRANCE

USIA WASHDC

SCDEF

DIRNSA FT GG MEADE MD

CINCPAC

CINCUSARPAC HAWAII

CDRUSMACV

COMUSMACTHAI

DEPCHJUSMAGTHAI

CDR USSAG NKP

DEPCDR 7/13 AF

CDR 7 TH RRFS RAMASUN THAI

CDR 7 ACCS KORAT

DODSPECREP BKK

DODSPECREP NKP

CHSPECACTS BKK

56 SOW NKP

432 TRW UDORN

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CDR JCRC NKP

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 1750

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, PINS, PINT, PFOR, LA

SUBJECT: LAO SITUATION REPORT- MARCH 9

CINCPAC FOR POLAD; MACV FOR COMMAND CENTER AND J3 08;
7/13 AF, 432 TRW AND 56 SOW FOR DO/ DI; MACTHAI FOR J2
AND PAO.

REF: VIENTIANE 1712

BEGIN SUMMARY: MILITARY- GROUND ACTION DECREASED SLIGHTLY, WITH ONLY NINE MINOR CLASHES AND SHELLINGS REPORTED DURING PERIOD 7-8 MARCH. FOUR- BATTALION FORCE WITHDRAWN FROM WESTERN BOLOVENS PLATEAU AS ACTIVITY SUBSIDES. RLAF T-28' S FLEW AT INCREASED RATE AND SEVERAL SORTIES WERE AGAINST QUESTIONABLE TARGETS IN MR' S IV AND V. REPORTED ARTILLERY EXPENDITURES CONTINUED EXTREMELY LOW. POLITICAL- PRESS REPORTS THAT IN MARCH 8 MEETING OF POLITICAL STUDY GROUP, RLG PROPOSED POLITICAL CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL COMPOSED OF 16 PERSONS FROM EACH SIDE PLUS EXPERTS, WITH DESIGNATIONS TO BE MADE BY SOUVANNA AND SOUPHANOUVONG. PRIME MINISTER NOTED PRIVATELY MARCH 8 THAT POLITICAL NEGOTIATIONS MOVING VERY SLOWLY, LARGELY BECAUSE THERE IS NO LPF REPRESENTATIVE IN VIENTIANE WITH SUFFICIENT RANK TO DISCUSS POLITICAL MATTERS. MILITARY STUDY GROUP MET AFTERNOON MARCH 9 AND RESULTS NOT YET KNOWN. END SUMMARY

1. SECTION I- CEASEFIRE OBSERVANCE

A. MR I: NO GROUND OR AIR ACTION REPORTED.

B. MR II: ONLY GROUND ACTION WAS MINOR CLASH NEAR THA VIANG, SOUTHEAST OF PDJ, ON 8 MARCH (TWO FRIENDLY MIA). RLAF FLEW FOUR T-28 SORTIES IN SUPPORT. UPDATE OF CASUALTIES FROM THA VIANG CLASHES REPORTED REFTEL: FIVE FRIENDLY KIA, 12 WIA, TWO MIA VICE 14 WIA.

C. MR III: THERE WERE FOUR MINOR GROUND ACTIONS. TWO CLASHES OCCURRED 16 AND 24 KILOMETERS SOUTHEAST OF THAKHEK ON 7 MARCH(ONE FRIENDLY WIA). ON 8 MARCH, FRIENDS FIRED
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MORTARS AT SUSPECTED ENEMY UNIT 17 KILOMETERS SOUTH OF THAKHEK WITH UNKNOWN RESULTS. THERE WAS ONE CLASH EAST OF KENGKOK ON 7 MARCH(NO CASUALTIES). RLAF FLEW TWO T-28 SORTIES, BOTH SOUTHEAST OF THAKHEK AGAINST ENEMY TROOPS. ENEMY FIRED AT CONTRACT MEDEVAC HELICOPTER APPROXIMATELY 35 KILOMETERS EAST OF THAKHEK ON 7 MARCH (NO CASUALTIES/ DAMAGE).

D. MR IV: THERE WERE FOUR GROUND INCIDENTS: TWO CLASHES JUST WEST AND SOUTHWEST OF PAKSONG ON 7 AND 8

MARCH (NO CASUALTIES); TEAM CLASH WELL NORTHEAT OF KHONG SEDONE ON 6 MARCH (ONE ENEMY WIA); AND ENEMY ATTACK BY FIRE SOME 30 KILOMETERS SOUTH OF SOUKHOUMA ON 8 MARCH (NO CASUALTIES). RLAF FLEW FOUR T-28 SORTIES ON 8 MARCH, ALL IN SUPPORT OF UNIT SHELLED IN ABOVE ACTION. FURTHER REPORT INDICATED THAT 7 MARCH T-28 STRIKES AGAINST " ENEMY LOCATION" 19 KILOMETERS NORTH OF PAKSE (REPORTED REFTEL) WERE IN REALITY IN VICINITY OF VILLAGE OVER WHICH PL HAD RAISED FLAG (NO KNOWN CASUALTIES/ DAMAGE). FOUR- BATTALION FORCE THAT HAD BEEN OCCUPYING POSITIONS ON WESTERN BOLOVENS PLATEAU HAS BEEN RETURNED TO ITS MR III BASECAMP.

E. M V: NO GROUND ACTION REPORTED, ALTHOUGH PATROL NORTH OF SALA PHOU KHOUN JUNCTION FOUND ENEMY CACHE CONTAINING ONE HEAVY MACHINEGUN AND MISC AMMO. RLAF FLEW 12 T-28 SORTIES ON 8 MARCH, ALL IN EASTERN PART OF REGION AGAINST QUESTIONABLE TARGETS: FIVE SORTIES STRUCK LOCATION NORTHWEST OF NAM HOU (SITE 360) OVER WHICH PL FLAG WAS FLYING AND KTOM WHICH LAO FAC RECEIVED GROUND FIRE BUT NO HITS (FOUR BUNKERS AND SEVEN STRUCTURES DAMAGED). OTHER SEVEN SORTIES WERE CONTROLLED AGAINST SMALL NUMBERSMFF ENEMY TROOPS SIGHTED APPROXIMATELY 45 KILOMETERS EAST OF PAKSANE AND 70 KILOMETERS NORTHEAST OF VIENTIANE.

F. COUNT OF CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS: RLG DEFMIN ANNOUNCED 10 ADDITIONAL ENEMY CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS, BRINGING TOTAL TO 187 AS OF MORNING 8 MARCH. OUR COUNT OF GROUND VIOLATIONS INITIATED BY BOTH SIDES CLIMBED SLIGHTLY TO 43 MAJOR AND 255 MINOR INCIDENTS THROUGH 6 MARCH.

2. SECTION II- POLITICAL SITUATION

A. DEVELOPMENTS IN LPF/ RLG TALKS

1) ACCORDING REPORT IN LOCAL PAPER, XAT LAO, RLG REPRESENTATIVE TO POLITICAL STUDY GROUP SAID THAT IN GROUP' S MARCH 8 MEETING, RLG HAD PROPOSED THAT POLITICAL CONSULTATIVE CONFIDENTIAL

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COUNCIL BE COMPOSED OF 16 PERSONS FROM EACH SIDE PLUS 8 OTHER INDIVIDUALS WITH EXPERIENCE. ACCORDING TO THIS ACCOUNT, DESIGNATION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS WOULD BE LEFT TO SOUVANNA AND SOUPHANOUVONG.

2) IN CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR, MARCH 8, PRIME MINISTER AGREED WITH OBSERVATION THAT POLITICAL NEGOTIATIONS WERE MOVING VERY SLOWLY AND SAID THAT HE HAD SENT ANOTHER MESSAGE TO SOUPHANOUVONG INDICATING URGENCY OF SENDING LPF REPRESENTATIVE OF SUFFICIENT RANK TO DISCUSS POLITICAL MATTERS. PRIMIN ADDED THAT HE WAS GOING TO LUANG PRABANG WEEKEND MARCH 10-11 TO CONFER WITH KING ON FUTURE CABINET.

3) OFFICIAL LAO PRESSE, MARCH 9, PUBLISHED TEXT OF TELEGRAM SOUVANNA SENT TO SOUPHANOUVONG ON MARCH 8, POINTING UP URGENCY OF CREATING BOTH NEW PGNU AND THE MIXED COMMISSION WHICH UNDER VIENTIANE AGREEMENT MUST

BE ESTABLISHED WITHIN ANOTHER 15 DAYS. SOUVANNA NOTED THAT HE HAD NOT RECEIVED RESPONSE TO MESSAGE HE HAD SENT MARCH 1 ASKING SOUPHANOUVONG TO INSTRUCT HIS REPS TO MOVE RAPIDLY ON CREATING THE MIXED COMMISSION. SOUVANNA ASSERTED COMMISSION ABSOLUTELY INDISPENSABLE FOR CONTROLLING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT, AND ASKED FOR A CLEAR DECISION. HE INVITED SOUPHANOUVONG TO CONSIDER WHAT GRAVE CONSEQUENCES CONTINUED DISREGARD OF AGREEMENT'S PROVISIONS ON THIS POINT COULD HAVE.

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